

## A Guide to Wellness While on Self Isolation

### **1. Try to maintain a routine**

Set an alarm to get up and ready for the day and try to maintain your regular bedtime. Try to keep your normal mealtimes and eat with others if possible.

Remember that you can go in your yard or for a walk as long as you're not interacting with others, so try to spend some time in the fresh air at times that you normally would. Take pets for their regular walks. Think about following the plan, not your mood.

### **2. Make a daily schedule and slot in time for:**

Self-care: Have a shower, get dressed, and complete your grooming activities like you would for a regular day. Did you know that there is something called PJ Paralysis? In hospitals there has been research done that patients have better health outcomes just from getting dressed every day.

Physical needs: Try to get some exercise (inside or outside), eat healthy balanced meals, and try to stay hydrated.

Regular sleep is important but can be difficult with stress. Try not to nap unless you are sick. Seek sunlight during the daytime and avoid screens before bed. Try using relaxation techniques like deep breathing or body scans to help quiet your mind when trying to sleep. (Lots of sleep resources: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-solutions/sleep-tools-tips>)

Productivity: If you are able to work from home this is ideal. Think about mental stimulation like taking an online course or learning from the internet. Household jobs like cleaning, meal planning, and meal prep can also give you a sense of purpose.

Leisure: Think about quiet leisure activities like reading, listening to/playing music or podcasts. Build social connections like reaching out to friends and family on the phone or playing games as a family. This could be a time to explore creative activities like colouring, drawing, or journaling.

Spirituality: Schedule time to meet your spiritual needs in whatever way feels right to you: meditating, looking at the stars, reading the Bible, talking to your spiritual leader, etc.

### **3. Put limits on screen time.**

We could all be glued to our phones reading all of the stressful updates, but it is probably healthier to put in blocks of time for screens. Try watching TV only at set times and try to be mindful of how often you're checking your phone/social media.

### **4. Take time for your emotional health.**

Know that it is normal to feel a wide range of emotions like fear, anxiety, sadness, and loneliness. Acknowledge that you are experiencing these feelings and see if you can find an outlet: someone to talk to, stress reduction techniques like meditation, laughter, exercise, journaling your experience, initiating a list of things you are grateful for. Seek external help if you need to (here is a resource with linkages: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx>).

### **5. Social contact/alone time.**

We all function differently, but everyone needs a healthy balance of both of these things. If you're on isolation alone, make sure you're reaching out to friends and family. If you're on isolation with others, make sure that you give yourself and the other people some space if needed.

If you have children at home:

[https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/infosheet-children\\_in\\_self-isolation-english-9032020\\_0.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/infosheet-children_in_self-isolation-english-9032020_0.pdf)

### **6. Savour experiences.**

Try to plan things on your list that you can get excited about each day. Some examples, plan a date night where you order in food, request your favourite coffee to be delivered by a friend, only watch one episode of your favourite show each day so you are excited for the next episode.

### **7. Take time to evaluate your priorities**

Self-isolation gives us the opportunity to think about the things that are the most important to us. Spend time on the things that mean the most to you.

Written by members of the Medicine Hat Hospital Occupational Therapy department.

Occupational Therapists have the unique perspective of looking at the whole person, their environments, and the things that they do. We hope to help people to live their best lives, no matter what the circumstances.